



Council Agenda Report

To: Mayor Kearsley and the Honorable Members of the City Council

Prepared by: Claudio Sanchez, Acting City Engineer

Approved by: Julia James, Administrative Services Director

Date prepared: August 28, 2003 Meeting date: September 3, 2003

Subject: Civic Center Way Pilot Project

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Review the report and accept public comments on the Civic Center Way pilot project.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

DISCUSSION: Winter Canyon Road is the location of several schools and businesses and experiences a high level of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, especially during the mornings and afternoons when schools are in session. Along Winter Canyon Road there exists Our Lady of Malibu Church and School, Webster Elementary School, the Los Angeles County Road Maintenance Yard, Southern California Edison, and Malibu Glass Inc.

Representatives from both Webster School and from Our Lady of Malibu School contacted the City seeking review and assistance in helping develop solutions to traffic circulation and school traffic problems along Winter Canyon and Civic Center Way.

During certain parts of the day, the concentration of pedestrians, traffic and the businesses on Winter Canyon Road results in uncoordinated, uncontrolled, and conflicting movements among pedestrians, traffic, and parking. Parents are interested in delivering students and leaving in a short time span at the same time that teachers and staff are arriving to work looking for all day parking. This can also conflict with traffic from the businesses along Winter Canyon Road that are arriving for work. Parents, children and teachers walk in and on the sides of the street, among drop-off traffic, parked cars, and in front of multiple driveway entrances.

Adding to this difficulty is the relatively high volume and velocity of traffic on Civic Center Way where it fronts the private road leading to school property. This traffic makes entrance to and exit from Winter Canyon Road difficult.

Several of the principal parties on Winter Canyon Road and representatives from the City met several times to address the traffic and pedestrian issues and to seek solutions. The general focus of the meetings was to establish safety for school students, parents, and teachers and staff and to provide orderly traffic flow, and parking for teachers, staff, and parents. The County of Los Angeles has offered to help with parking by providing the front portion of its maintenance yard for school parking. The City has offered to study the traffic access issue on Civic Center Way.

Several alternatives were presented to the City Council in May 2002 to address the traffic concerns on Winter Canyon Road and Civic Center Way. The alternatives included the placement of a cul-de-sac on Civic Center Way at the Winter Canyon intersection. City Council directed staff to review the cul-de-sac alternative exclusively. Staff was subsequently directed to implement a trial pilot project to close off Civic Center Way at Winter Canyon simulating a cul-de-sac. Staff developed an implementation plan for a six-month pilot project involving the closure of Civic Center Way between Vista Pacifica and Winter Canyon Road in order to study the impacts of a cul-de-sac on traffic and the surrounding streets.

The pilot project was implemented on August 7, 2003. Two weeks prior to implementation of the barricades, advanced warning signs were placed along Malibu Canyon Road, Pacific Coast Highway and on Civic Center Way to give motorists advanced notice. Information was posted on the City's Web site and the Traffic Information/ Emergency Radio system. A notice was published in the Malibu Surfside News for two consecutive weeks in July. A press release was issued and notification letters were sent to residents in the surrounding area, to the businesses on Civic Center Way and Cross Creek Road as well as to the Malibu Chamber of Commerce and to the neighboring municipalities. Staff also conducted a meeting and invited several agencies including the Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, Caltrans, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the utility agencies prior to implementation. A special phone line was set-up to accept comments from the public. The public also has the opportunity to provide comments via email through the City's Web site and have been informed that they can provide written comments.

As of the date of this report, Staff has documented 356 phone calls, 29 emails and 7 written comment letters. The primary issues being raised are delays and inconvenience of the longer drive on Pacific Coast Highway. Staff has been monitoring the traffic impacts to determine if adjustments to the plan need to be made. In Staff's monitoring of the traffic, there have not been any significant delays observed. Some of

the problems that Staff has observed include confusion about the closure or disregard for the signs as through traffic continues to travel in the direction of the closure requiring to double back to access Pacific Coast Highway to get to their destination. In some cases vehicles will make illegal u-turns at mid-block. Initially, Staff observed a high number of vehicles, approximately 5 vehicles per minute on some occasions. This has dropped to about 1 per minute on average. It was anticipated that there would be some confusion at the onset. Staff has also observed problems with the traffic signals on Pacific Coast Highway at Cross Creek, Webb Way and at Malibu Canyon Road. Staff is working with Caltrans to correct these problems. It should be noted that these problems existed prior to the Civic Center Way road closure and Caltrans has been working toward a permanent solution.

Staff has observed traffic congestion on Pacific Coast Highway at certain times of the day since implementation of the pilot project. Some of this can be attributed to the summer beach traffic resulting from the warmer than usual weather, problems with the traffic signals and the additional traffic detoured on to Pacific Coast Highway resulting from the closure at Civic Center Way. This traffic however usually clears through the intersections within one to two traffic signal cycles.

As of the date of this report, traffic generated by the schools has not been an impact as the schools are on summer break. The new school year is scheduled to commence the week of September 1st.

As part of the pilot project, Staff will be conducting a before and after traffic study. The before study information was compiled before the pilot project was implemented. The after traffic study data is expected to be collected in October. Following the six-month trial period the barricades are to be removed and Civic Center will be re-opened. Staff will analyze the information collected and present the information to the City Council for consideration.